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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4329
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RUYNAA/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
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INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7858
RUEHNH/AMCONSUL NAHA 0240
RUEHNAG/AMCONSUL NAGOYA 6177
RUEHKSO/AMCONSUL SAPPORO 8449
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 1539
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 9865
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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TOKYO MEDIA REACTION - PRESIDENT BUSH IN
MIDEAST

¶1. LEAD STORIES: Most Monday papers gave top play to the continuing rescue efforts in quake-hit Sichuan Province in China.

¶2. "Poor Results from Mideast Tour" The liberal Asahi's correspondent report from Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt claimed (5/19): ". . . . Although President Bush made additional commitments to Middle East peace during his recent tour of the region, he failed to present any concrete measures to reach an agreement. . . . For the President, Iran, which the U.S. labels as a state sponsor of terrorism, constitutes a more serious problem, as the nation appears to support anti-U.S. groups in Iraq, the Palestinian Authority, and Lebanon. The next step President Bush will be able to take will be limited, as he has stated that he will not have direct negotiations with Iran until it freezes its nuclear development programs."

¶3. "Clouds Hanging over Middle East Peace" The moderate Yomiuri's correspondent report argued (5/19): ". . . . Although the biggest goal of President Bush's tour of the Middle East was promoting peace in the region, prospects for reaching a peace agreement by the end of this year appear dim, as Arab nations reacted strongly to the President's pro-Israel position expressed during the trip."

¶4. "No Progress in Middle East Peace" The business-oriented Nikkei's Washington correspondent contends (5/19): ". . . . Although President Bush's visit to the Middle East was aimed at promoting negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians, the focus was placed on

the war on terrorism in the face of Iran's nuclear development. It appears difficult to regain momentum toward Middle East peace, as Arab nations are showing a strong reaction to the lack of progress in the peace talks."

SCHIEFFER